

electronic components and other products and services in their home environment. The program offers potential buyers a first-hand knowledge of technological capacity, quality control, and a company's ability to meet its sales commitments. The branch assists British Columbia companies to participate in trade shows in national and international markets. A Market Development Program sends company representatives overseas in an attempt to tap new markets, especially for firms which may not find it appropriate or possible to participate in trade missions.

A Small Business Assistance Program assists managers in studying, analyzing and diagnosing business problems and recommending solutions and in preparing financial proposals and applications for assistance through the various aid programs available. Through its Technical Assistance Program, the branch shares companies' costs in undertaking market and financial feasibility studies, as well as studies designed to improve productivity. The aim of this program is to provide incentive to companies to expand their facilities, diversify their product lines, or enter into new business.

The Department of Economic Development maintains liaison with the British Columbia Development Corporation, established as a Crown corporation to stimulate industrial growth. The corporation provides for the acquisition and servicing of land suitable for industrial use in areas where serviced industrial land was not previously available, or where high land costs prohibited the location of individual firms. It also provides direct financial assistance to large enterprises in the form of medium- and long-term capital. The aim is to complement the funding available from established lending institutions. Loans up to \$150,000 are provided to smaller companies. The department maintains a trade and industry office at British Columbia House in London, England.

17.4 Government aid and controls

17.4.1 The Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs

The functions of the department relate to consumer affairs; corporations and corporate securities; combines, mergers, monopolies and restraint of trade; bankruptcy and insolvency; patents, trade marks, copyright and industrial design.

The department has five main divisions — the Bureau of Consumer Affairs, the Bureau of Corporate Affairs, the Bureau of Intellectual Property, the Field Operations Service and the Bureau of Competition Policy. The Bureau of Consumer Affairs coordinates government activities in the field of consumer affairs; its branches include Consumer Services, Consumer Credit, Consumer Research and the Consumer Standards Directorate. The Bureau of Corporate Affairs administers legislation and regulations pertaining to corporations. Its branches include Corporations, Bankruptcy, Securities and Research. The Bureau of Intellectual Property administers laws pertaining to patents, copyright and industrial design, and trade marks, with a branch responsible for each of these three fields. Canada's participation in international intellectual property organizations is the responsibility of the Research and International Affairs Branch, and the role of informing Canadians of the services of the bureau is provided by the Technical Advisory Services Branch. The Field Operations Service supervises the department's operations across Canada, staffing regional and district offices in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax and in several other cities. They ensure that laws and regulations administered by the department are uniformly applied and interpreted in all parts of the country. The field force includes consumer consultants and information officers in each region, complaints officers, inspectors and specialists in the fields of bankruptcy and false and misleading advertising.

The Bureau of Competition Policy has four operating branches, specializing in Resources, Manufacturing, Services and Trade Practices. There is also a